415 "The best pieces of equipment of which they can boast are
923 some small vessels of "palo santo" [lignum vital—a kind of wood--Translator] and a few small clay pots with very narrow mouths and two little handles which serve them as water flasks on their frequent raiding forays."

"Men and women alike shave their heads completely. They
302 use, for that purpose, the sharp jaw of a certain fish, and their own teeth serve them to pare their nails. They cover themselves as best
291 they are able from their waists to their knees. The men, on gala
296 occasions, often wear a sort of sleeveless jacket and hang a kind of
415 bag from one shoulder in which they keep a crude wooden pipe, fire
●[276] making equipment and other nicknacks. Both the bag and the coat are knitted, made from agave or chaguar fiber, and curiously marked.
302 They pull out their beards, eyelashes and eyebrows, and either to improve their looks or in order to appear more terrible in battle, they blacken their faces and chests with coal dust."

"Their favorite food is fish, and lacking this, all kinds of wild
262 fruits or roots other than the poisonous ones. Their principal vegetable food, on which they can count for a quarter of each year and which they store to some small extent, is the fruit of the algarrobo, chañar and mistol. They also eat, and that without repugnance, lizards, locusts, crickets [593], mice, and even eggs after they have been abandoned, together with other filth. They eat fish and any other kind of meat
[252] or roots, roasted or boiled, and know of no other way of preparing food.
[261] They can withstand hunger admirably, and when they are unable to get other food they spend their time lying about chewing some herb or leaf from the forest."

"From the algarroba [pod which grows on the algarrobo tree--
273 Translator] they make a beverage which is extremely delicious to their
579 taste and which intoxicates them and makes them very fierce. Their drunken parties almost always end in a fierce fight which would have dire results were it not that the women, who never drink of that liquor, are careful to hide the arrows and all other offensive weapons and to hold back and separate those engaged in fighting."

"When the algarroba starts to turn yellow, they place in a cen-
533 222 tral place among the huts, the pimpin, which is a log, concave at its upper end, covered with a piece of hide. A drummer with a belt about

3: Metraux E-5 (1933) 1939 SI7 Mataco SI7

Young men seen dancing while an old medicine-man is performing a treatment are practicing the fundamentals of the art before becoming full fledged doctors. Not all succeed for the trials laid on the medicine-man's soul during the journey to the spirits are hard and many give up. 756

When a medicine-man performs his ceremonies, or as the natives say »*dice misa*», he changes himself into a white bird called *yulo* in Spanish. The medicine-man is said to transform himself into a bird, but when asked how such a change occurs without the body of the magician undergoing a change, the natives explained that only the soul of the man becomes a bird. In order to send his soul abroad in the shape of a bird the medicine-man plays for a long time on a flute made of the bone of a *yulo* bird. By so doing he creates an intimate contact between himself and the bird, but the real transformation occurs only after he has snuffed a powder called *hatax*. This intoxicating powder is prepared from the seeds of the *sebil* (*hatek*), a very common tree which grows abundantly in the Chaco and in the north of Argentina. The seeds are gathered, parched and pounded in a wooden mortar. The powder is exposed to the air a long time and then put in a calabash that has been used by medicine-men during their ceremonies. When the medicine-man has changed himself or his soul into a bird he goes into the sky »like an airplane» and calls on Rain to make him fall. To meet Rain he must enter his house through a very narrow door. 756 276 756

Just before sowing time the medicine-men go up into the sky to get rain. Without their aid the crop would dry up. Thus at the village Km. 600, all the cattle would have died had it not been for the Matako medicine-men who helped the white men by calling on the rain.

Old people say that once there was a heavy rain and some children became frightened and the Rain took them up into the heavens. A medicine-man in the form of a bird went up to bring them back.